Message

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Sent: 12/6/2021 10:05:18 PM
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Subject: OCSPP News for December 6, 2021
Attachments: Inside TSCA Newsletter 12.6.21.pdf

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EPA Strips Wheeler's Animal-Testing Targets From Revised NAM Work Plan

Maria Hegstad, Inside TSCA

https://insideepa.com/tsca-news/epa-strips-wheeler-s-animal-testing-targets-revised-nam-work-plan

EPA has published a revised version of its work plan for new alternate methods (NAMs) of chemical toxicity testing that removes all references to former Administrator Andrew Wheeler's directive to generally eliminate animal testing from the agency's work by 2035, signaling its potential retreat from what environmentalists said was an unrealistic goal.

With no public announcement, EPA posted to its website Dec. 2 an updated "New Approach Methods Work Plan," that duplicates some elements of the Trump-era original, including its title and cover, but makes no mention of Wheeler's goals for reducing agency requests for and funding of mammalian animal testing 30 percent by 2025 and eliminating them by 2035.

For instance, while the June 2020 work plan opens with a summary of Wheeler's September 2019 directive, the update cuts that language entirely and replaces it with a general statement of support for a shift away from animal tests and toward NAMs.

"Reducing the use of vertebrate animals for toxicity testing is a priority for [EPA] and, as such, the Agency is working on the development and application of [NAMs]. NAMs are defined as any technology, methodology, approach, or combination that can provide information on chemical hazard and risk assessment to avoid the use of animal testing," it reads.

The updated document no longer contains any references to 2025 and 2035 as targets for that transition. Instead, the document lays out a series of steps that the agency intends to take to advance the use of NAMs and reduce animal testing that run through 2024 -- and no further.

Where the original document describes "the short- and long-term strategies it will deploy…and the different deliverables on which the Agency will focus, so the public can track EPA's progress towards meeting the 2025 and 2035 goals," the new document says it "discusses the near- and long-term strategies it will deploy through 2024 . . . and the different deliverables on which the Agency will focus, so the public can track EPA's progress."

The agency's website for the work plan, updated Dec. 2, notes only that "EPA's [NAMs] Work Plan was created to prioritize agency efforts and resources toward activities that aim to reduce the use of vertebrate animal testing while continuing to protect human health and the environment. The original EPA NAMs Work Plan was released in June 2020 and laid out the Agency's objectives and strategies. The updated EPA Work Plan was released in December 2021."

EPA did not respond to a request for comment on the directive's status -- which has been in limbo since the end of the Trump administration -- by press time.

However, Biden administration officials had previously told EPA's research advisors that the Wheeler policy was being reconsidered, raising expectations that it would be revised or dropped even before the new work plan's arrival.

Advocates' Praise

Despite the apparent cut of Wheeler's strict deadlines, animal-welfare groups that support NAMs and welcomed Wheeler's policy are nonetheless welcoming the revised plan, especially for its expansion of language that originally aimed to reduce testing on live mammals to instead include all vertebrate animals.

That change aligns with language Congress added to the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) in its 2016 overhaul of the law, directing EPA to "reduce and replace, to the extent practicable, scientifically justified and consistent with the policies of this title, the use of vertebrate animals in the testing of chemical substances."

In a Dec. 3 statement, the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) notes EPA's updated work plan "increases the EPA's efforts to reduce and replace testing on all vertebrates by expanding the first work plan's focus beyond mammals, to include fish, amphibians, and birds. This is a huge step in protecting all animals from chemical tests and unsafe chemicals."

"We are pleased to see that the plan confirms that the [...]

Toyota Says 'Time to Get Serious' About Chemicals in Products
Pat Rizzuto, Bloomberg Law
https://news.bloomberglaw.com/environment-and-energy/toyota-says-time-to-get-serious-about-chemicals-in-products?context=search&index=22

Industries making planes, refrigerators, computers, and other goods need to know what specific chemicals are in their products so they can understand how evolving chemical regulations could affect them, auto and electronics industry officials said Friday at a Pentagon conference.

A lot of industries think it's too burdensome to know which chemicals are in thousands of parts used to make their products, Mark Bacchus, a senior manager at Toyota Motor North America, Inc., told participants during a session that discussed U.S. and European chemical regulations.

But "you have to do it. There's no way around it," he said. "It's time for us to get serious globally about knowing what's in our products."

The global auto industry has spent $10 billion since the late 1990s to develop an International Material Data Management System to identify chemicals throughout the supply chain, Bacchus said.

Such information helps industry officials quickly figure out whether car manufacturers widely use a particular chemical that a country or region may regulate, he said.

Being able to trace chemical uses throughout the supply chain is "paramount," said Kelly Scanlon, director of environmental policy and research for IPC, a global electronics trade association.

Despite making progress, she said, the electronics industry needs to do more.

Compliance Struggles
Automobile manufacturers are struggling to figure out how they'd comply with a proposed rule under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) that could require them to report per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, used in cars, Bacchus said.

The Environmental Protection Agency's proposal, which could cost $1 million per automotive company, doesn't even include a specific list of the PFAS it could cover, he said.

He ticked off numerous other Canadian, European, and U.S. federal and state regulations manufacturers of cars

and other goods manufacturers may be affected by.

Industries can't afford to be caught off guard as many were when the EPA banned many uses of a flame retardant and plastic softener called phenol, isopropylated phosphate, or PIP 3:1, Bacchus said. The agency later extended the compliance timeline for manufactured goods.

PFAS, Lead Rules
Bacchus, Scanlon, and other speakers described how TSCA, Canada's chemical regulations, and a host of European chemical and waste regulations affects a range of industries, especially those serving the military market.

Most European regulations offer the defense industry exemptions, said Alexandra Lesage, a European Defense Agency officer working on REACH, the EU's Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals regulation. Yet those exemptions don't guarantee that a chemical military equipment needs will be available, she said.

Lead-based solder, for example, remains important in "high performance, high reliability" applications such as electronics needed for defense equipment, Scanlon said. Yet at least six existing EU regulations and regulatory revisions underway may limit the metal's use, she said.

At least five U.S. and European regulations and policies could affect the electronic industries use of PFAS, Scanlon said. Those developments could affect whether and how companies can use fluoropolymers, a type of PFAS, in circuit boards, wires, and cables, she said.

More information about how these chemicals are used in defense applications, the quantities in which they're used, and what happens to them when equipment is recycled or disposed of, could be useful in discussions with regulators, Scanlon said.

US state alliance adopts resolution to promote multilevel cooperation on PFASs
NA, Chemical Watch
https://chemicalwatch.com/386092/us-state-alliance-adopts-resolution-to-promote-multilevel-cooperation-on-pfass

The Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) has passed a resolution asking the US government to coordinate dozens of measures on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs), demonstrating states' shared goal of tackling the persistent substance class alongside federal entities.

The group – which aims to boost the capability of state environmental agencies – adopted the policy statement on 1 December to emphasise steps for successful joint study, clean-up and regulation of the compounds.

Describing PFASs as "a public health and environmental emergency that threatens communities and their local economies", the document calls on national agencies to act swiftly, including by expanding scientific review, providing funding to at-risk jurisdictions, setting enforceable pollution standards and integrating states into the dialogue about federal efforts.

The US government should ban PFAS-containing aqueous film-forming foams (AFFF) for testing and training at Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) sites, the non-profit said, and support the creation of fluorine-free firefighting foams (F3).

The group posed a number of requests to the EPA, including that it rapidly:

carry out the PFAS roadmap;
use TSCA risk evaluation and management to fully regulate PFAS applications, and annually hand over to states all toxicity information from PFAS producers;
devise PFAS-replacement assessments for products via the Safer Choice Program or reputable independent research bodies;
approve analytical testing methods for various media; and
ask its Council on PFAS to interface more strongly with EPA, state and other workgroups.
Additionally, the organisation pressed President Biden to issue an executive order requiring several Department of Defense (DOD) measures. They include completely implementing the PFAS provisions of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA); frequently communicating with states by supplying data, progress reports and participation opportunities; and regularly summarising AFFF substitutes' hazards, performance and costs.

Meanwhile, ECOS updated a 2015 emerging contaminants resolution, which urges attention to their presence, faster collaborative responses and federal resources. Its executive director Donald Welsh told Chemical Watch the main change was the deletion of PFASs due to the new resolution's making.

Guide for national initiatives
"PFASs is a very high priority for many states," Mr Welsh said. "Members felt that it was appropriate to have a policy statement reflecting their interest in moving forward to address this important topic."

According to Alexandra Dunn, a partner in law firm Baker Botts and a former ECOS head, the document "represents the states' view that there are many, many parties that need to be involved". The unusual inclusion of requests for the president shows "they'd like to see action at the highest levels", she told Chemical Watch.

The statement gives the alliance "a very wide platform to speak on PFAS issues in public forums" and defines a common state-level stance for the US government, Ms Dunn added. It illustrates states' overall needs to the EPA, can help Congress formulate legislation and "can certainly amplify and enhance the discussion", she said.

In 2018, ECOS launched a PFAS caucus to talk about best practices and a PFAS coordinating committee of state and national agency officials to convey updates. In 2020, the organisation published a paper exploring considerations for establishing state PFAS standards.

Hearings to review federal PFAS cleanup efforts, research
E.A. Crunden, E&E News
https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2021/12/06/hearings-to-review-federal-pfas-cleanup-efforts-research-283915

E&E DAILY | Options for tackling the sprawling "forever chemicals" crisis will get a closer look this week in both the House and Senate.

On Thursday, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee will devote a hearing to "examining federal efforts" in addressing PFAS contamination, a major source of controversy for lawmakers on both sides of the aisle.

Chair Gary Peters (D-Mich.) is convening the hearing to probe contamination from per- and polyfluoroalkyl

substances at military sites. An inspector general report this summer faulted the Department of Defense for failure to control PFAS at sites around the country, which has now left the military facing billions in cleanup and remediation costs (Greenwire, July 27).

A Peters aide told E&E News the hearing will examine the OIG report and how service members and communities have been exposed to PFAS, as well as how lawmakers can take steps to hold the government accountable.

Witnesses for that hearing will include EPA Inspector General Sean O'Donnell and multiple Defense Department representatives. A second panel will feature local activists who have drawn attention to PFAS contamination, along with Ohio EPA Deputy Director of Business and Regulatory Affairs Mark Johnson.

Also this week, two House Science, Space and Technology subcommittees will host a joint hearing on PFAS. The conversation will focus on parsing more information about the issue along with potential solutions as communities nationwide grapple with contamination.

Both the Environment and the Research and Technology subcommittees will feature testimony from two academics familiar with PFAS: environmental chemistry professor Elsie Sunderland of Harvard University and Princeton University professor Peter Jaffé, who teaches civil and environmental engineering.

Members will also hear from Amy Dindal, who directs environmental research work at the Battelle Memorial Institute, and Michigan PFAS Action Response Team Executive Director Abigail Hendershott.

Michigan is dealing with some of the most high-profile PFAS contamination incidents in the country, and the state has been aggressive in its response, drawing attention from other states hoping to enact similar measures.

Hendershott will likely speak about how the state has conducted testing for the chemicals and how it has made decisions around identifying and addressing contamination.

The Research and Technology Subcommittee is chaired by Rep. Haley Stevens (D-Mich.), who has been outspoken about PFAS issues in her state. In a February interview with E&E News, Stevens emphasized the need for more involvement from scientists and for bipartisan progress on the problem (E&E Daily, Feb. 18).

Schedule: The House hearing is Tuesday, Dec. 7, at 10 a.m. via webcast.

Witnesses:

Elsie Sunderland, Harvard University environmental chemistry professor.
Abigail Hendershott, executive director, Michigan PFAS Action Response Team.
Amy Dindal, director of environmental research and development, Battelle Memorial Institute.
Peter Jaffé, professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Princeton University.
Schedule: The Senate hearing is Thursday, Dec. 9, at 10:15 a.m. in 342 Dirksen and via webcast.

Witnesses:

Sean O'Donnell, EPA inspector general and Department of Defense acting inspector general.
Michael Roark, deputy Defense inspector general for evaluations.
Richard Kidd, deputy assistant secretary of Defense for environment and energy resilience.
Laura Macaluso, acting deputy assistant secretary of Defense for force safety and occupational health.
Tony Spaniola, co-chair of the Great Lakes PFAS Action Network.
Andrea Amico, co-founder of Testing for Peace.

Mark Johnson, deputy director of business and regulatory affairs at Ohio EPA.

Biden pushed to mandate PFAS-free federal procurement
Nico Portuondo, E&E News
https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2021/12/03/biden-pushed-to-mandate-pfas-free-federal-procurement-283889

GREENWIRE | Thirty five environmental and public health groups sent a letter to the White House yesterday pressing President Biden to issue a mandate aimed at curbing federal purchases of materials with PFAS, a class of highly toxic chemicals.

"During your campaign, you pledged to make PFAS a priority," the letter said to Biden. "We need more action to stop creating the problem in the first place."

The letter argues that Biden's recent actions on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, including EPA's expansive PFAS Strategic Roadmap, aren't doing enough to keep PFAS pollution from entering the environment through manufactured materials like furniture and carpeting (Greenwire, Oct. 18).

The groups urge Biden to set an example of stopping "upstream" pollution by crafting a policy that directs federal agencies to stop purchasing materials with intentionally added PFAS, setting a deadline for EPA to publish buying recommendations for PFAS-free materials, and mandating training for federal procurement officers on PFAS materials.

Some chemicals in the PFAS family have been repeatedly linked to health impacts, including cancer. PFAS is often added to everyday materials like clothing, floor treatments, curtains, cleaners, personal care products and food containers.

Amid Hill Struggles, Environmentalists Ask Biden To Curb PFAS Purchases
Diana DiGangi, Inside TSCA
https://insideepa.com/tsca-news/amid-hill-struggles-environmentalists-ask-biden-curb-pfas-purchases

Environmentalists are asking President Joe Biden to issue a directive that would limit federal procurement of products containing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), set deadlines for their phaseout and require EPA to develop guidance for preferred products as they struggle to win Capitol Hill support for new limits on such purchases.

"This directive would be a practical and immediate action to start turning the tide of products containing intentionally-added PFAS in the marketplace," a coalition of environmental groups said in a Dec. 2 letter to Biden.

The letter was signed by several dozen groups including Earthjustice, Toxic-Free Future (TFF), the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), and Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families (SCHF).

It cites campaign promises made by Biden and his running mate, Vice President Kamala Harris, to take action

on PFAS chemicals -- including a vow to prioritize sustainable substitutes through federal procurement.

"The EPA's recently released PFAS Strategic Roadmap included some important national commitments, but lacks an 'upstream' focus on pollution prevention," the groups write.

"A separate White House fact sheet announcing a government-wide initiative to tackle PFAS also failed to mention procurement policies."

They add that a federal procurement mandate that "steers" the government toward PFAS-free products would "help" additional PFAS from entering the environment.

The groups note that the federal government spends "billions" each year on goods from the private sector, many of which contain PFAS, like "clothing, carpeting, floor treatments, curtains, upholstered furniture, cleaners, personal care products, food containers and firefighting turnout gear."

"Many safer solutions already exist among product categories, and a new federal directive would stimulate the market to produce even more," they say.

Their request comes as Congress appears unlikely to expand existing limits it has already placed on DOD procurement of products containing PFAS.

For example, the fiscal year 2021 national defense authorization act (NDAA) barred DOD from purchasing some products containing PFOA or PFOS, two of the best-known chemicals in the class.

House lawmakers have sought to expand that in the FY22 bill, for example, by seeking to ban DOD from purchasing a much wider array of "covered items" if they contain any PFAS, not just PFOA and PFOS.

The updated ban would apply to non-stick cookware or food service ware; food packaging materials; floor waxes; carpeting, rugs, curtains, or upholstered furniture; personal care items; dental floss or toothpaste; sunscreen; umbrellas, luggage, or bags; ski wax; car wax and car window treatments; cleaning products, and shoes and clothing treated with PFAS for any non-essential purpose.

Senate Bill

But the Senate Armed Services Committee did not include the House provisions in the version of the bill that is currently awaiting action on the Senate floor.

In addition, the House measure has drawn stiff opposition from the chemical industry, which opposes proposals to widely broaden limitations on procurement or treat PFAS as a class when it comes to regulation, arguing that such regulations are overbroad and will have unintended consequences.

"Taking this approach would set a dangerous precedent for other critical defense applications like aerospace, electronics, and high-speed telecommunications equipment," the American Chemistry Council (ACC) told Inside TSCA in September. "Furthermore, Congress already acted under the 2020 NDAA to restrict DOD procurement of specific materials that contained PFOA and PFOS."

But in their letter to Biden, the environmental groups say any new order should direct federal agencies to "avoid the purchase of products made with intentionally added PFAS to the maximum extent possible."

And it should set "a deadline for EPA to publish environmentally preferable purchasing recommendations addressing PFAS, including [...]

US EPA expects to extend registration review for several biocides

NA, Chemical Watch

https://chemicalwatch.com/386087/us-epa-expects-to-extend-registration-review-for-several-biocides

The US EPA expects to have to extend the review period for some active substances that were registered under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (Fifra) before 1 October 2007.

Fifra rules state registrations must be reviewed every 15 years, so the agency has a total of 726 to assess by 1 October next year.

However, in its Pesticide Bulletin of 2 December, the EPA said it anticipates this will take longer to complete because of the demands of responding to Covid-19, delays in receiving data from registrants, as well as a significant increase of resources devoted to litigation.

But the agency added that during the past 15 years, it has:

issued more than 550 interim or final decisions;
completed more than 600 proposed interim decisions;
conducted more than 680 human health and ecological draft risk assessments;
imposed new risk mitigation measures for 51% of antimicrobial substances and 70% of conventional pesticides for interim or final decisions; and
cancelled some or all uses in 120 cases.

Schedule

The EPA has also released its schedule for the next four years, which targets 297 substances for review between 2022 and 2025.

The agency said its timeline is an estimate and could change based on shifting priorities. Several cases are not included because of uncertainty about when the necessary data will be supplied, it added.

From now on, the schedule will be updated every quarter rather than annually.

Compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is also part of the registration review process. As such, the agency intends to release in the coming months its first workplan that will outline the steps to comply with the ESA, in ways it said would be "fair and transparent for the agriculture sector".

Since 2007, the EPA has completed ESA biological evaluations for certain 'high-priority' biocides, such as:

chlorpyrifos;
malathion;
diazinon;
carbaryl;
methomyl;
atrazine;
simazine;
propazine; and
glyphosate.

The agency said it plans to assess the effects of many more on endangered species in registration review in the years ahead.

Pesticide-banning bill gets new Senate champion

Marc Heller, E&E News

https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2021/12/03/pesticide-banning-bill-gets-new-senate-champion-283860

E&E DAILY | New Jersey Democratic Sen. Cory Booker is picking up where former Sen. Tom Udall of New Mexico left off in an effort to ban several types of pesticides used on farms.

Booker has reintroduced a bill, H.R. 3283, titled the "Protect America's Children From Toxic Pesticides Act," which would ban paraquat as well as all organophosphates and neonicotinoids.

In calling for a prohibition on entire classes of pesticides, Booker would end the use of several farm chemicals that farm organizations say are critical to crop production but which scientists have linked to a range of health threats to people who are exposed.

The bill mirrors legislation of the same name that then-Sen. Udall introduced last year (E&E Daily, Aug. 4, 2020). Legislation to ban pesticides is referred to the Agriculture committees, generally friendly to farm interests although Booker is a member in the Senate.

"Farmworkers are often exposed to dangerous and toxic pesticides, risking their health as they work to provide our food," Booker said in a news release. "It is imperative that we address this issue directly by updating our laws in order to protect farmworkers, frontline communities, and our environment."

The weedkiller paraquat has been linked to Parkinson's disease in some studies, and Booker's office cited research indicating it can increase the odds of the illness by 200 to 600 percent. EPA, however, has said the overall body of research isn't conclusive, and the agency has allowed its continued use with restrictions on how it's applied.

Paraquat can also be fatal if ingested, a risk that isn't disputed by its maker, Syngenta, which adds an ingredient to induce vomiting and endorses other measures to discourage misuse.

Farm groups defend paraquat, including the National Corn Growers Association, which told EPA in public comments earlier this year that it "remains a critical part of many corn farmers' pesticide program today."

Organophosphates, which include chlorpyrifos, have been linked to neurological damage in children. More than a dozen types are in use, totaling around 16 million pounds applied nationally in a year, according to the environmental group Earthjustice.

Of those chemicals, chlorypyrifos has generated the most attention. The Obama administration began a process to ban it, which the Trump administration reversed and the Biden administration has resumed, each claiming science is on its side.

Under President Trump, EPA also cited the importance of chlorpyrifos to crop production — a sentiment echoed in August by the American Farm Bureau Federation, objecting to EPA's moves under President Biden.

As a matter of process, the American Farm Bureau Federation has complained to EPA about trying to ban chlorpyrifos outside the pesticide's periodic regulatory review.

Neonicotinoids, often cited for risk to pollinators, have also been linked to developmental defects in unborn

children, Booker's office said, citing the Natural Resources Defense Council, which mentioned emerging research on the issue on its website.

Neonics, as the chemicals are commonly called, are the most widely used type of insecticide and are typically applied to seeds before planting. The major trade group for pesticide manufacturers, CropLife America, has said the seed treatments don't pose a threat to bees but that the industry is committed to reducing dangers from dust that escapes when chemicals are applied to the seeds.

In addition to the ban, Booker's bill would set up a petition process available to the public to try to limit use of certain pesticides. It would also limit EPA's ability to approve the use of pesticides in certain emergencies or other situations before they've gone through full regulatory review.

Under the legislation, pesticides deemed unsafe in Canada or by the European Union would be suspended in the U.S. pending a review by EPA.

"Silenced Data" Means We Don't Know Global Impacts Of Cotton Pesticides

Brooke Roberts-Islam, Forbes

https://www.forbes.com/sites/brookerobertsislam/2021/12/06/silenced-data-means-we-dont-know-global-impacts-of-cotton-pesticides/?sh=1d959dce668b

In my six years of journalism, none of my articles have generated as much debate as this cotton misinformation series. The previous three articles debunking myths about organic versus conventional cotton, water consumption, and cotton being a "thirsty" crop, have drawn cries of relief and fierce conjecture, with heated conversations ongoing on LinkedIn.

Cotton is an emotive subject, with the livelihoods of more than 20 million cotton farmers and workers in gins, mills, and garment factories on the line. The final stop on this global myth-busting tour of the most prominent plant-based textile fiber is Pesticides.

During an interview with the authors of the Transformers Foundation case study on cotton misinformation, they disclosed that the biggest knowledge and data gaps in the cotton industry are around pesticides. The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) describes a pesticide as "any substance, or a mixture of substances of chemical or biological ingredients intended for repelling, destroying or controlling any pest, or regulating plant growth." Despite encompassing more than 1,000 active ingredients, pesticides are often talked about as if they're all one thing, the case study explains. Its authors Elizabeth Cline and Marzia Lanfranchi warn that oversimplification and inaccurate pesticide usage figures stand in the way of understanding their environmental and social impacts, and taking action.

Cotton farmers use a variety of pesticides that target insects (insecticides), weeds (herbicides), and fungal infections (fungicides). They also use growth regulators, and defoliants to aid mechanical harvesting. The majority of cotton seeds come pretreated with insecticides and fungicides, and additional pesticides are used on soil (to control weeds, fungus, and insect pests), and as an application on the cotton crop.

Regulations and reporting on pesticide use vary from country to country, and the most complete and current publicly available data, held by ICAC (the International Cotton Advisory Committee) relates to pesticide sales—not use. Pesticide data gaps are "staggering", according to the cotton misinformation case study, and it is particularly scant throughout much of Africa, where chemicals can have a high human impact: There are millions of smallholder cotton farmers, and a higher rate of usage of the most hazardous pesticides (as deduced

from pesticide sales data). On the flip side, high-income countries, including the U.S. and Australia, require farmers to submit detailed pesticide usage data - but this data may not be publicly available.

During their research, the study's authors discovered that nuanced country-specific pesticide data is privately held and must be purchased from market research groups such as Phillips McDougall (IHS) and AgbioInvestor. Cline and Lanfranchi describe this as "silenced data" that they were quoted fees of up to $80,000 to gain access. They conclude that due to pesticides' human health and environmental implications, "there is an urgent need for data that captures exactly what pesticides are being used, where, and how, including the method of application."

Organic cotton is grown without synthetic chemicals and synthetic pesticides or genetically modified seeds. As of the 2019/2020 growing season, organic cotton held a 0.95% market share of cotton, according to Textile Exchange's preferred fiber and materials market report 2021. This statistic tells us that understanding the environmental and social impacts of cotton pesticide use is central to sustainable cotton farming, as the proportion of crops grown without them is negligible. In short, we need to ensure safe pesticide use because eliminating pesticides doesn't seem viable for several reasons: The global demand for textile fibers (including cotton) is growing, and the limited yield capacity of organic cotton cannot meet that demand. Therefore, pesticide use should be analyzed and optimized for long-term environmental, [...]

Pennsylvania State Rep. Proposes Pesticide Labels for Food
Philip Gruber, Lancaster Farming
https://www.lancasterfarming.com/news/main_edition/pennsylvania-state-rep-proposes-pesticide-labels-for-food/article_67dfc131-d34e-52c6-ab90-ad7993963fea.html

A Pennsylvania state legislator wants raw agricultural products to be labeled if they were treated with a post-harvest pesticide.

Shipping containers containing raw agricultural commodities are already required to be labeled if pesticides are used. But Rep. Angel Cruz, D-Philadelphia, said this labeling doesn't do much for consumers because foods such as fresh produce are generally unpacked before being sold at retail.

Cruz announced Nov. 23 that he is planning a bill that would "require that any raw agricultural product removed from its shipping container shall also bear a label declaring the presence of a pesticide chemical applied after harvest."

The label would have to identify the chemical and its function.

A detectable level of a pesticide or its residue does not necessarily mean that the food is unsafe to eat. The Environmental Protection Agency sets pesticide tolerances at levels that provide "reasonable certainty of no harm."

Bug Bombs, Prone to Exploding, Are Target of Legislation to Ban Their Use
NA, Beyond Pesticides
https://beyondpesticides.org/dailynewsblog/2021/12/bug-bombs-prone-to-exploding-are-target-of-legislation-to-ban-their-use/

(Beyond Pesticides, December 6, 2021) An effort is underway in New York State to restrict, and in certain cases ban, "bug bombs," led by State Senator Zellnor Myrie (D-NYC). Total release foggers, more aptly referred to as bug bombs (because in some cases, they literally blow up), are dangerous indoor devices that release an aerosolized plume of toxic pesticides and unknown inert (or other) ingredients in an overpowered, ineffectual attempt to manage common pest problems. As Senator Myrie notes in his legislative justification for the bill, "This is an environmental justice issue disproportionately affecting lower-income individuals, as bug bombs are a relatively inexpensive pest management solution. As a result, individuals living in older, larger multi-dwellings, who also suffer from adverse health outcomes like asthma at higher rates, are disproportionately exposed to the harmful effects of bug bombs."

Urge your Governor (Mayor for DC residents) to ban bug bombs in your state!

Senator Myrie's legislation, S.7516, will allow only certified pesticide applicators to purchase and use the dangerous devices, and would completely ban their use in multi-unit dwellings. "Foggers should not be used in multi-dwelling buildings, but existing New York state law does not prohibit this use," Senator Myrie continues in his legislative justification. "Restricting the sale of pesticide foggers to consumers, restricting their use in multi-dwelling buildings, or restricting the use to licensed pesticide applicators will reduce their use by ensuring they are applied only by personnel trained to understand and follow the restrictions and warnings on the product label and will result in better targeting when they are used."

While eliminating consumer use by restricting the devices to certified pesticide applicators would be an important step forward, there is considerable evidence to justify an all-out ban that extends beyond multi-family units. Problems with these devices stretch far back. In spite of over 450 bug bomb related illnesses between 2001-2006 in the United States, EPA rejected a petition from the NYC Department of Health (DoH) in 2009, claiming that incidents were "overwhelmingly minor in nature," resulting from "a few basic errors" and concluded that "label improvements can mitigate these risks." EPA subsequently introduced new labels, this time with comic-book style pictures indicating the steps required to use the products.

Almost a decade later, in 2018, CDC officials published a new report on the revised labels, determining that EPA's actions represented a public health failure. Between 2007 and 2015, CDC cataloged 3,222 illnesses caused by bug bomb use. This nearly 8-fold increase in reported incidents reveals that EPA's new labels caused more problems and confusion than the previous labels already determined to be deficient. The main cause of poisoning was a failure to leave the premises. The CDC report also notes, "Some users ventilated treated premises for the recommended length of time or longer, but still became ill, suggesting that ventilation might be inadequate or the recommended period might be insufficient to fully eliminate TRF [total release fogger] residuals before occupancy."

In addition to the inherent dangers of using these products is the fact that they do not work at all, according to a 2019 study. "In a cost-benefit analysis, you're getting all costs and no benefits," said Zachary DeVries, PhD, co-author of the study. "Bug bombs are not killing cockroaches; they're putting pesticides in places where the cockroaches aren't; they're not putting pesticides in places where cockroaches are and they're increasing pesticide levels in the home.

Many common household pests, like cockroaches and bed bugs, have displayed widespread resistance to the insecticides primarily used in bug bombs—synthetic pyrethroids—the primary failure with bug bombs is that the pesticide does not get into the cracks and [...]

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